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JOINT INTELLIGENCE INDICATIONS COMMITTEE

Report of Indications of Soviet-Communist Intentions

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JCS Declassification/Release Instructions on File

From: 9 November 1950
To : 15 November 1950
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2
Department of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.
16 November 1950

No. 15

1. SITUATION AT END OF PERIOD

- a. The Soviet armed forces in being are in an advanced state of readiness for war and could initiate offensive operations with no additional warning. There are no indications of the probability of imminent Soviet hostilities.
- b. The increase in Chinese Communist forces in Manchuria and Northeast China, the widespread Chinese defensive measures, and the nature of Chinese Communist propaganda indicate the definite possibility of major Chinese Communist intervention in Korea. Although present Chinese Communist military activity in Korea would appear to have only limited objectives, there are other indications that the Chinese Communists have decided, as a minimum step, to increase their support of the North Koreans and have made defensive preparations in expectation of retaliation. Present Chinese strategy appears designed to halt the U.N. advance in Korea and to stall for time while preparations for larger action are completed.
- c. Continuing evidence of the build-up of Viet Minh forces with Chinese Communist aid indicates a possibility of larger Viet Minh operations in the relatively near future, although there are no firm indications of such Viet Minh intentions.
- d. The Chinese Communist advance on Tibet is probably continuing.
- e. There continues to be little evidence of accelerated military preparations in Communist Europe and Soviet political activity is presently marked by relative restraint. The lull in Soviet aggressiveness may be an effort to support the "peace" campaign and foster public sentiment in opposition to Western rearmament, or a deliberately deceptive move to cover plans for further aggression.

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TOP SECRET**2. SUMMARY OF SOVIET-COMMUNIST OPERATIONS DURING PERIOD**

- a. **KOREA-CHINA.**—The total Chinese Communist strength in Korea is in doubt but probably includes substantial elements of four field armies. Enemy ground activity was not marked by offensive tactics, but enemy air activity has been increasingly aggressive. Further reports confirm the large-scale build-up of Chinese Communist striking forces in Northeast China and Manchuria, with some Third Field Army forces reportedly deployed to the Shantung Peninsula. There is evidence of extensive and hurried Chinese Communist defensive preparations, including evacuations from large cities, movement of industry inland, build-up of air and coastal defense, and enlargement of the militia for local defense. Chinese Communist purchasing agents in Hong Kong are seeking products for short-term delivery only. There are indications of increased Soviet naval aid to Communist China and of accelerated efforts to build up the Chinese Communist air force. Propaganda continues to emphasize that Chinese troops in Korea are "volunteers" and that China is threatened, but the statements also imply that U.N. forces are to be driven out of Korea and the American invaders annihilated.
- b. **INDO-CHINA.**—First reliable evidence that the Viet Minh are receiving armored equipment has been received, and increased shipments of heavy equipment are expected. There are no indications that Chinese Communist aid has been diminished with the concentration of Chinese military strength in Northeast China. Despite a lack of firm indications of immediate Viet Minh intentions, their capabilities continue to increase and larger operations are possible in the relatively near future.
- c. **TIBET.**—The Chinese Communist advance is probably continuing although it appears still to be some distance from Lhasa.
- d. **EUROPE.**—The military and political situation in Eastern Europe continues extremely quiet. There was little indication received during the week of unusual troop activity, increased civil defense measures, or a further acceleration of logistical build-up or transportation improvements. Some further tightening of security has been evident. Soviet political tactics continue to be marked by relative restraint, and the current "soft" policy toward Iran has apparently had some effect in allaying Iranian fears of Soviet aggressive intentions. The further integration of the Soviet and Eastern European Satellite economies is proceeding rapidly.
- 3. COMMUNIST CAPABILITIES.**—Chinese Communist capabilities for large-scale military action in Korea are increasing rapidly and Viet Minh capabilities for more extensive action continue to increase. There was no apparent significant change in the European area.

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TAB "A"

REPORT OF INDICATIONS OF SOVIET-COMMUNIST INTENTIONS

Proceedings of the Joint Intelligence Indications Committee
15 November 1950

1. Indications of Intentions in the Far East.

a. Although military activity in Korea within the past week continued to provide no conclusive indications of Chinese Communist or North Korean offensive action, reports have indicated a continuing build-up of military strength in Northeast China and widespread and hurried defensive preparations throughout China. Propaganda continued to place heavy emphasis on the recruitment of Chinese "volunteers" for Korea and on the necessity of annihilating the American invaders.

(1) The limited contact with enemy forces in Korea during the past week leaves in doubt the total number of Chinese Communist forces now committed in Korea, although field estimates of this strength have been increased to 75,600. Based on PW reports, it is possible that the Chinese Communist force in Korea is now comprised of major elements of four armies (the 38th, 39th, 40th and 42d), but the limited number of prisoners precluded the definite acceptance that all these Chinese Communist forces are now present in this total strength. Enemy ground force activity gave no indication of immediate offensive intentions, but it is clear that enemy defensive capabilities have been substantially increased within the past two weeks. Enemy jet fighters continued to operate from bases in Manchuria, and their action was marked by increasingly aggressive tactics, particularly attacks on U.S. B-29's.

(2) Although present enemy action in Korea would seem to indicate limited or defensive objectives in the immediate future, numerous reports from China point to large-scale military preparations, including both a continuing build-up of troop strength in Northeast China and widespread defensive preparations. Additional reports of Chinese Communist troop movements continued to indicate a heavy northward movement of troops and equipment from South China and the Fukien area during late October and early November. Rolling stock was reported concentrated in Northeast China and Manchuria and all commercial rail traffic into the Northeast was reported still suspended as of 10 November. However, the ultimate destinations of the 3d and 4th Field Army

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troops involved in this movement were not entirely clear. In addition to the undoubted build-up of forces in Manchuria, there were indications that elements of the Third Field Army were being deployed to the Shantung Peninsula, the tip of which is approximately 120 miles from the Korean coast. Third Field Army forces, which were originally intended for the Formosa invasion, are reported to have received some training in amphibious operations during the summer. This deployment therefore is a possible indication of preparations for amphibious operations, although there have been no reports to date of a northward movement of shipping from the Fukien coast and the Chinese Communists are at present estimated to have a very limited capability for amphibious operations, particularly with respect to air support. There were indications during the week, however, of increased Soviet naval assistance to the Chinese Communists. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the observation of a submarine at Dairen flying the Chinese Communist flag, and there are indications that the U.S.S.R. is to ship large quantities of Soviet mines, torpedoes, depth charges and magnetic compasses to the East China Naval Torpedo Factory at Shanghai.

- (3) Further reports of Chinese defensive preparations now indicate that this activity has not been confined to Manchuria but is widespread throughout eastern China. Within the past week, sources on the mainland have reported that Chinese Communist ministries are being moved from Peiping to the interior; arsenals and small arms plants are being moved inland from the Shantung and Fukien coasts; air warning and anti-aircraft defenses are being improved in South and Central China; coastal defense construction is under way in the Canton area; trenches and barricades are being built north of the great wall; there is a general belief in Shanghai that world war is probable in the near future and that no extended defense of Shanghai is intended as defenses are being moved inland. There are also reports that the Chinese Communist militia is being expanded for local defense, and a Chinese Communist announcement of 28 October stated that this militia now totals more than 5,500,000. The build-up of this force may be intended both to provide defensive forces in South China with the deployment of substantial numbers of combat forces northward and to counteract anti-Communist guerrilla activity which is reported increasing in South China.

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(4) Although Chinese Communist propaganda continues to stress that their troops in Korea are "volunteers" and that the defense of China is paramount, the statements also imply that U.N. forces are to be driven out of Korea and the invading American troops annihilated. The trend of the propaganda is increasingly indicative of large-scale intervention and the Chinese no longer speak in terms of a "long-term war of attrition." There continues to be no mention in Chinese Communist propaganda of defense of the Yalu River hydroelectric installations or the establishment of a buffer zone below the Manchurian border. The Chinese Communist reply to the invitation to appear at Lake Success indicated that they would not discuss their own intervention in Korea but would utilize this opportunity only to reiterate their own charges of U.S. aggression in Korea and Formosa. The delay in the departure of their delegation may also indicate an attempt to stall for time. Soviet propaganda on Korea has been confined to favorable publicity for Chinese Communist statements. Soviet and Chinese Communist propaganda for the past several weeks has stressed charges that the U.S. is employing Japanese troops in Korea (the Sino-Soviet defense treaty specifically refers to the contracting parties' mutual obligations in event of aggression by Japan or any state allied with her).

(5) There are numerous reports that the Chinese Communists, with Soviet assistance, are making a concerted and accelerated effort to build up a considerably increased air force. This includes the increase of communications and maintenance facilities, the call-up of semi-trained personnel, and recurring reports of the return of trained Chinese Communist personnel from the U.S.S.R.

[redacted] aircraft factories (or assembly and maintenance depots) have been set up in Harbin, Changchun and Tihwa and that monthly capacity prior to June 1951 is expected to be 400. A current report indicates that Manchurian airfields are being improved, and there have been numerous previous reports of airfield construction in many locations in South and Central China. Reports of undetermined reliability state that there are now 300 Soviet and Chinese Communist aircraft in the Manchurian area and that the Chinese Communists intend to use 500 aircraft to attack U.N. forces. Some recent reports have indicated a northward movement of Soviet and Chinese Communist air personnel, and Chinese air personnel in Peking are reported to have moved to Tientsin. The Communists apparently have abandoned their efforts to secure control of disputed aircraft in Hong Kong and are withdrawing their air personnel from there.

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- (6) Recent Chinese Communist commercial activity in Hong Kong has revealed considerable confusion and change of plans. Purchasing agents have apparently been instructed by Peiping to withhold further purchases from overseas and to concentrate on items readily available in Hong Kong. The Communists are insisting on guarantees of delivery in Hong Kong by a 1 March 1951 deadline and have cancelled at least one shipment of U.S. cargo, although agents have publicly denied that there has been any change of plans.

b. In Indo-China, no firm reports have been received which would indicate an imminent Viet Minh attack in force against the Red River Delta or an imminent Chinese Communist invasion. French air reconnaissance, however, has revealed the presence of an armored vehicle, either an armored car or a light tank, in a Viet Minh convoy in Tonkin. Reports from other sources state that 5,800 Viet Minh have been training on Hainan Island under Soviet and Chinese instructors and that this group, which is believed to be equipped with 14 light tanks, may already have returned to Indo-China. Nine U.S. light tanks are reported to be ready for early delivery to the Viet Minh from Hainan. Although these reports are unconfirmed, an increased movement of heavy material to the Viet Minh from Hainan and by road from South China can be expected. Recent Viet Minh pressure on Moncay may indicate an early attempt to capture this outpost which, though small, could be quite useful in connection with arms supply from Chinese ports and Hainan. There are no indications that the present northward movement of Chinese Communist forces and equipment has resulted in any diminution of aid to the Viet Minh or that Chinese Communist troops are being withdrawn from the Indo-China border. The capture of French outposts has given the Viet Minh control of several airfields, and there are vague indications that a small Viet Minh air force may now be operating. Despite the lack of firm indications of immediate Viet Minh intentions, well-informed sources have recently expressed a fear that a strong Viet Minh threat to Laos may develop in the near future, and that the obvious rapid build-up of the Viet Minh may enable them to launch a major offensive before the end of 1950.

c. Reports of the week on the Chinese Communist advance on Tibet continued to be conflicting as to the exact whereabouts of the Chinese troops, although Indian sources have discounted reports that the invaders are within 40 miles of Lhasa. Press reports have indicated a possible temporary truce, but there appears to be no evidence that the Chinese Communists have abandoned their advance or that the Tibetan appeal to the U.N. will deter the Chinese.

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d. From the foregoing, it is concluded that:

- (1) The increase in Chinese Communist forces in Manchuria and Northeast China, the extensive evidence of widespread Chinese defensive measures, and the nature of Chinese Communist propaganda indicate a possibility of major Chinese Communist intervention in Korea. Although present Chinese Communist military activity in Korea would appear to have only limited objectives, there are other indications that the Chinese Communists have decided, as a minimum step, to increase their support of the North Koreans and have made defensive preparations in expectation of retaliation. Present Chinese strategy in Korea appears to be designed to halt the U.N. forces with minimum risk of immediate retaliation and to stall for time while preparations for larger action are completed.
- (2) There are no firm indications of Viet Minh intentions to launch a major offensive in the immediate future, but the continuing evidence of large-scale Chinese Communist logistical support and the rapid Viet Minh build-up indicate a possibility of more extensive operations in the relatively near future.
- (3) The Chinese Communist advance on Tibet is probably continuing although its present progress is not clear.

2. Indications of Intentions in Europe and the Near East.

a. The military and political situation in Eastern Europe continues extremely quiet. There has been little information received during the past week on unusual troop movements, increased civilian defense measures, a further logistical build-up or other accelerated military activity. There is also a notable lack of rumors of alleged Soviet and Satellite aggressive plans which were so prevalent throughout the spring and summer.

b. Almost all Soviet troops in Germany and Austria are now reported to have returned to winter barracks, and although less information is available on Satellite troop dispositions it is believed that the majority of these have also returned to normal garrisons. No further Soviet troop movement either into or out of Germany was reported during the week. Present indications in both Germany and Austria are that a larger number of troops have arrived than have departed, but there is no evidence of any significant strength increase and the departure of some older troops appears well established. There is no indication of unusual Soviet military activity in Hungary. Hungarian troops are now occupying a number of the new barracks areas.

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c. There have been some indications of a further tightening of security measures in Europe. In Rumania, a decree has given the militia greater powers over the movements of civilians and the authority to order persons out of crowded towns; this could also be an air defense precaution. Security measures at the Soviet staging center for the rotation of troops in Austria have reportedly been tightened. There have been some previously reported indications of tightened security measures in Poland. In Czechoslovakia, unconfirmed reports indicate that there has been a reinforcement of Czech units on the border opposite the U.S. Zone of Germany and that special communications squads have been established to cover border patrol and troop activity in the U.S. Zone.

d. Despite some reports of various rail and road improvements in the Soviet Zone of Germany, a review of all available information does not indicate that any significant retracking of east-west rail lines has been undertaken, that a major strengthening of bridges is under way, or that work on reconstruction of transportation lines has been recently accelerated. The various highway and bridge improvements under way appear to be generally those which have been planned for some time and include the reconstruction of one bridge across the Oder (a highway bridge at Frankfurt). In Hungary, a new highway bridge has been completed across the Danube at Budapest.

e. Soviet political policy in Germany, Austria and Iran has shown no significant change. In Germany, the Soviets have further tightened controls on traffic into West Berlin by blocking off secondary roads and are again stopping traffic at Helmstedt on the Autobahn, but such interference has been recurrent and does not appear indicative of any new policy. Soviet activity in Austria indicates a continued policy of undermining the authority of the Austrian Government. The chief significance of the Soviet-Iranian trade agreement appears to be the popular Iranian assumption that relations with the Soviet Union have thereby been much improved, and a concurrent reduction of Soviet propaganda against Iran indicates that the U.S.S.R. is endeavoring to foster this impression. The undulating character of Soviet policy towards Iran provides no real indication of Soviet intentions, although the present "soft" policy, concurrent with continued Soviet "peace" propaganda, may be another effort to allay fears that the Soviet Union has any aggressive designs in Europe or the Near East.

f. The terms of the new Czech-Soviet five-year trade agreement provide further evidence of the integration of the Czech economy into that of the U.S.S.R. and of the expansion of Czech heavy industry. Soviet exports of iron ore, copper and aluminum to Czechoslovakia are to be greatly increased and Czech exports to the U.S.S.R. are to consist entirely of products of the metal-working industry. Plans for a complete integration of the Soviet bloc economies are indicated by the fact that other signed Soviet-Satellite trade agreements have been for the same period, 1951-55.

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g. From the foregoing, it is concluded that:

- (1) Available intelligence does not indicate the probability of Soviet or Satellite hostilities in Europe in the immediate future, and there continues to be little evidence of accelerated military preparations in Europe in conjunction with the extensive Chinese Communist military preparations.
- (2) The current marked lull in Soviet aggressiveness in the West may be an effort to support the current "peace" campaign and foster sentiment in opposition to Western rearmament, or a deliberately deceptive move to cover plans for further aggression.



JOHN WECKERLING
Brigadier General, GSC
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